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Comments

RETIREMENT RATIONALE

Intelligence is a highly specialized function. Essentially, it is the acquisition of information and the preparation of accurate reports and informed estimates for the top policymakers of Government on an infinite variety of subjects which may affect the welfare of the United States. It operates 24 hours a day, every day, and the heavy basic responsibility is compounded by the pressures of timely action. For the proper performance of its function the Agency is obviously dependent on the caliber of its personnel, as the quality and timeliness of that product must meet the needs of the national security. The first requirement, therefore, is to recruit and train well-educated employees of high intellectual standards who have the stamina and enthusiasm to meet the pressures and keep abreast of the modern world, and also the imagination, flexibility, and perceptive judgment to keep the intelligence product at the highest level of quality.

These needs produce two complementary problems of personnel management. The first is to be able to offer a career that will induce people of the required quality to come to the Agency and to stay through their most productive years. The second is to see that employees are not retained after they have lost the combination of qualifications which, as stated above, are essential.

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In 1959 it was decided normal attrition through death, resignation, and retirement was not adequate to answer these personnel management requirements and it was necessary to install a policy that employees would retire when first entitled to an unreduced annuity. With the various changes in law since that time, the policy presently sets age 60 with 20 years of creditable service for those employees under the Civil Service Retirement System.

In the last few months an intensive review has been made of the impact on, and continuing need for, this policy. In the case of the professional intelligence officers and those other professionals supporting them, it is clear that unless some such policy is continued the older employees occupying the higher positions will be blocking the advancement and, therefore, impairing the careers of the younger officers who may then leave, with the resulting detrimental impact on recruitment of the proper type of new employees. Furthermore, it becomes apparent that a considerable portion of these older employees, with of course many notable exceptions, no longer are capable of, or willing to, perform in the manner needed to meet the requirements and pressures to produce the superior product that is required. The conclusion is clear that in this category of employees an early retirement policy is an essential management tool and that this policy should continue to provide for retirement at age 60 with 20 years or more of creditable service.

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